

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5654

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

CONFIDENTIAL ADDIS ABABA 9102

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJECT: URBAN LAND REFORM PROCLAMATION: ZAMETCHA TO HAVE
IMPLEMENTING ROLE

REF: ADDIS 9046

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. PRESS, JULY 29 - AFTER REPORTING ARREST OF 31 YOUNG MEN FOR
SEEKING TO UNDERMINE ACCEPTANCE OF URBAN LAND REFORM-MAKES
AMPLY CLEAR THAT EPMG EXPECTS UTILIZE ZAMETCHOCH TO HELP IMPLEMENT
SUBJECT PROCLAMATION.

2. PMAC 1ST V/CHAIRMAN MAJ. MENGHISTU OPENING A THREE DAY HSIU
SEMINAR ATTENDED BY 1,200 ZAMETCHOCH PRAISED CONTRIBUTION OF
ZAMETCHA IN IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION'S MAJOR DECISIONS

JUST AS ZAMETCHA HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN PMAC'S EFFORTS TO
LIBERATE PEASANTRY FROM YOKE OF FEUDALISM, IT WILL NOW BE CALLED
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UPON "TO ASSIST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCLAMATION NATIONAL-

IZING URBAN LANDS AND EXTRA HOUSES."

3. MENGHISTU THEN URGED SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS TO FOLLOW STRICTLY DIRECTIVES THEY WOULD RECEIVE ON THEIR DUTIES IN THIS CONTEXT SO THAT THE ERRORS COMMITTED AT THE INCEPTION OF THE RURAL CAMPAIGN MIGHT BE AVOIDED.

4. MENGHISTU SAID THAT THE EPMG ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RUBAN DWELLERS "COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES" WHICH "WILL NOT TAKE PART IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCLAMATION BUT WILL SERVE AS ONE OF THE NUCLEI FOR THE CREATION OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF ETHIOPIA IN THE NEAR FUTURE."

5. EARLIER, MAJ. KYROS ALEMAYEHU, CHAIRMAN OF THE ZAMETCHA, ALSO TOLD THE SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS THAT THEY HAD BEEN SELECTED "TO IMPLEMENT" THE PROCLAMATION. THE PARTICIPANTS WERE LATER DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS FOR BRIEFINGS (A) ON THE DETAILS OF THE PROCLAMATION AND (B) THE ORGANIZATION OF COOPERATIVE URBAN DWELLERS ASSOCIATIONS.

6. THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD ALSO EDITORIALIZED ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROCLAMATION. IT URGED THE ZAMETCHOCH TO DISCHARGE THEIR DUTIES IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION TO THE UTMOST OF THEIR ABILITY NOW THAT THEY WERE ABOUT TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF IMPLEMENTING MEASURES WHICH STUDENTS HAD LONG BEEN FIGHTING FOR. END UNCLASSIFIED.

7. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL COMMENT: WE FIND THE FOREGOING NOTEWORTHY BECAUSE IT: A. DEMONSTRATES THAT THE EPMG IS NOT AFRAID TO BRING SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF ZAMETCHOCH INTO ADDIS; B. PROVIDES AUTHORITATIVE INDICATION THAT THE RURAL AND URBAN COLLECTIVES ARE INTENDED TO FORM THE BASE OF THE "SOCIALIST PARTY OF ETHIOPIA"; C. CONFIRMS A POSSIBLY DIRECT ROLE FOR THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENT IN ETHIOPIA IN THE REDISTRIBUTION OF URBAN PRIVATE PROPERTY.

8. WHILE IT IS STILL FAR FROM CLEAR THAT THE ZAMETCHOCH WILL, IN FACT, BE CALLED UPON TO DETERMINE DIRECTLY WHO SHOULD RETAIN WHAT PROPERTY, THAT CERTAINLY IS THE FEAR OF ETHIOPIA'S URBAN MIDDLE CLASS. (CF REFTEL). UNTIL THE PRECISE DUTIES ENVISAGED FOR THE ZAMETCHOCH IN THIS CONCEPT BECOME CLEARER, WE WOULD EXPECT THIS FEAR, AND THE ASSOCIATED CONCERN WITH POSSIBLE INCIDENTS/LAWLESSNESS AND EXCESSES, TO CONTINUE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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